

REMARKS

INTRODUCTION

In accordance with the foregoing, claims 1-7, 9-13 and 16-19 have been amended. Claims 14, 15 and 20-23 have been cancelled. Claims 1-13, 16-19 and 24-31 are pending in the application.

CLAIM REJECTIONS – 35 U.S.C. § 112

Claims 1-31 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. 112, second paragraph, as being indefinite. Appropriate correction has been made to claims 1-7, 9-13 and 16-19 in order to overcome the rejection under 35 U.S.C. 112, second paragraph. Further, claims 14, 15 and 20-23 have been cancelled. It is submitted that claims 8 and 24-31 properly claim the invention in their present form.

CLAIM REJECTIONS – 35 U.S.C. § 102

Claims 1-5, 14-22 and 24-31 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by Kashimura (U.S. Patent No. 4,772,007).

Kashimura discloses a cut sheet holding a feeding apparatus. In Kashimura, on one side of the fixed cover 202 (that side adjacent to the lever 211), there are provided a release arm 216 pivotable about a vertical shaft 215, a side keeping member 218 biased inwardly laterally by a spring 217 and regulating the side edge of cut sheets, a support plate 219 fixed to the fixed cover 202, and a separating pawl member 221 vertically pivotably supported on the support plate 219 through a pin 220. Kashimura, 8:20 – 8:28.

A paper width regulating plate 222 is fixed to the other side of the fixed cover 202 (that side opposite to the lever 211), and a separating pawl member 223 symmetrical with the separating pawl member 221 is supported on the paper width regulating plate 222 through the pin 220. Kashimura, 8:29 – 8:34.

A separating pawl 224 cooperable with the paper supply rollers 205 to separate cut sheets one by one from the uppermost layer is formed on the fore end of each of the separating pawl members 221 and 223. An ear 225 extending inwardly and engageable with the intermediate plate 207 is formed on the rear end portion of each of the separating pawl

members 221 and 223 so that when the intermediate plate 207 is depressed, the separating pawls 224 and 224 are upwardly pivoted in response thereto. Kashimura, 8:35 – 8:44.

Claims 1-5

Amended claim 1 recites: “...a finger device portion ~~formed to be operated~~ by the knock-up plate raising/lowering portion and the paper guide, the finger device portion being formed on both sides of the frame so as to press both corners of the leading end of ~~one of the papers~~ sheets when the ~~one of the~~ one of the topmost paper sheet is picked up by the pickup roller, thereby causing the papers to be separated and fed sheet by sheet.” In contrast to amended claim 1, Kashimura discloses that the separating pawls 224 and 224 are operated from one side of the frame by the lever 211 as is shown in Figures 13-15. In contrast to amended claim 1, the configuration disclosed in Kashimura is arranged only with respect to one side of the leading end of the paper, so the paper may be skewed. Amended claim 1 recites a finger device portion operated on both sides of the frame.

Claims 2-5 are dependent on claim 1 and are therefore believed to allowable for the foregoing reasons.

Withdrawal of the foregoing rejection is requested.

Claims 14 and 15

Claims 14 and 15 have been cancelled.

Claims 16-22

Amended claim 16 recites: "...a first finger device disposed on the knock-up plate raising/lowering portion to contact a first end of the paper, a paper guide slidably disposed on the knock-up plate to guide the sheet of paper in accordance with a paper size, and a second finger device portion movably disposed on the paper guide to contact a second end of the sheet of paper." In contrast to amended claim 16, Kashimura discloses that the separating pawls 224 and 224 are operated from one side of the frame by the lever 211 as is shown in Figures 13-15. In contrast to amended claim 16, the configuration disclosed in Kashimura is arranged only with respect to one side of the leading end of the paper, so the paper may be skewed. Amended claim 16 recites two separate finger device portions operated on both sides of the frame.

Claims 17-19 are dependent on claim 16 and are therefore believed to allowable for the foregoing reasons. Claims 20-22 have been cancelled.

Withdrawal of the foregoing rejection is requested.

Claims 24-32

Claim 24 recites: "...a first finger device movably disposed on a first portion of the knock-up plate to contact a first end of the paper; and a second finger device movably disposed on a second portion of the knock-up plate to contact a second end of the paper." In contrast to claim 24, Kashimura discloses that the separating pawls 224 and 224 are operated from one side of the frame by the lever 211 as is shown in Figures 13-15. In contrast to claim 24, the configuration disclosed in Kashimura is arranged only with respect to one side of the leading end of the paper, so the paper may be skewed. Claim 24 recites two separate finger device portions disposed on separate sides of the frame.

Claims 25-31 are dependent on claim 24 and are therefore believed to allowable for the foregoing reasons.

Withdrawal of the foregoing rejection is requested.

CLAIM REJECTIONS – 35 U.S.C. § 103

Claims 6, 7 and 9 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over the Kashimura patent as applied to claim 2 above, and further in view of Kobayashi et al. (U.S. Patent No. 5,615,873) (hereinafter "Kobayashi").

Kobayashi discusses a paper feeder in a printer. In Kobayashi, when operation lever 260 is rotated causing actuating portion 261 to swing swinging member 240, holding portion 245a of swinging member 240 engages actuating portion 261 to maintain the position of rotation of operation lever 260. Hence, the operation of inserting the paper is facilitated. Kobayashi, 13:54 – 13:60.

Claims 6, 7 and 9 are dependent on claim 1 and are therefore believed to be allowable for the foregoing reasons. Further, claims 6, 7 and 9 recite features that are patentably distinguished over Kashimura and Kobayashi, taken alone or in combination. For example, claim 2 recites that a first finger portion is formed on one side of the frame with respect to the

knock-up plate raising/lowering portion to press one corner of the leading end of the paper sheets; and a second finger portion is formed on the other side of the frame with respect to the paper guide to press the other corner of the leading end of the paper sheets.

Withdrawal of the foregoing rejection is requested.

CONCLUSION

There being no further outstanding objections or rejections, it is submitted that the application is in condition for allowance. An early action to that effect is courteously solicited.


Finally, if there are any formal matters remaining after this response, the Examiner is requested to telephone the undersigned to attend to these matters.

If there are any additional fees associated with filing of this Amendment, please charge the same to our Deposit Account No. 19-3935.

Respectfully submitted,

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Date: Sept 7, 2005

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